Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended)   A method for storing electronic documents comprising the steps of:

associating ~~an associative object with~~ at least one electronic document and a digital seal using an associative object, wherein the ~~associative object~~ the digital seal uniquely corresponds to an image of a seal, stamp, or tape that is visually displayable within a user interface;

displaying said image within said user interface;

moving the displayed image within the user interface as said digital seal ~~associative object~~ is associated with said at least one electronic document so as to visually simulate said image being affixed to said at least one electronic document;

generating an audio signal ~~simulation of said displayed image being affixed to the at least one electronic document~~ when the displayed image is moved adjacent to or over another image within the user interface representative of the at least one electronic document so as to audibly simulate said image being affixed to said at least one electronic document;

storing at least one metadata attribute as a characteristic related to said associative object; and

modifying a logical storage location characteristic of said at least one electronic document based on one of said metadata attributes.

2.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein said associative object is [[a]] said digital seal.

3. (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

presenting at least one multimedia object within said user interface, wherein said multimedia object is a user selectable representation for said associative object.

4. (Original)   The method of claim 1, said modifying step further comprising the step of:

requiring an authorization code previously specified within one of said metadata attributes before allowing said at least one electronic document to be retrieved.

5. (Original)   The method of claim 4, wherein said authorization code is valid for a first user and wherein said authorization code is invalid for a second user.

6. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

associating a second digital seal ~~associative object~~ with one of said at least one electronic document using a second associative object.

7. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 6, wherein said ~~associative object~~ digital seal includes [[an]] a first authorization code, and wherein said second digital seal ~~associative object~~ includes a second authorization code, said method further comprising the step of:

requiring said first authorization code and said second authorization code before said one of at least one electronic document can be retrieved.

8. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

establishing a first authorization code for said digital seal ~~associative object~~, wherein said first authorization code is associated with a first image;

encoding said at least one associated electronic documents with a second authorization code associated with a second image; and,

decoding said at least one associated electronic documents using at least in part said first image.

9. – 21. (Cancelled)

22.　　(Currently Amended)　　A machine readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

associating ~~an associative object with~~ at least one electronic document _and a digital seal using an associative object,_ wherein the _digital seal_ ~~associative object~~ uniquely corresponds to an image of a seal, stamp, or tape that is visually displayable within a user interface;

displaying said image within said user interface;

moving the displayed image within the user interface as said _digital seal_ ~~associative object~~ is associated with said at least one electronic document so as to visually simulate said image being affixed to said at least one electronic document;

generating an audio _signal_ ~~simulation of said displayed image being affixed to the at least one electronic document~~ when the displayed image is moved adjacent to or over another image within the user interface representative of the at least one electronic document _so as to audibly simulate said image being affixed to said at least one electronic document;_

storing at least one metadata attribute as a characteristic related to said associative object; and

modifying a _logical_ storage _location_ characteristic of said at least one electronic document based on one of said metadata attributes.

23.   (Currently Amended)   The machine readable storage of claim 22, wherein said associative object is [[a]] said digital seal.

24.   (Original)   The machine readable storage of claim 22, further comprising the step of:

presenting at least one multimedia object within said user interface, wherein said multimedia object is a user selectable representation for said associative object.

25.   (Original)   The machine readable storage of claim 22, said modifying step further comprising the step of:

requiring an authorization code previously specified within one of said metadata attributes before allowing said at least one electronic document to be retrieved.

26.   (Original)   The machine readable storage of claim 25, wherein said authorization code is valid for a first user and wherein said authorization code is invalid for a second user.

27.   (Currently Amended)   The machine readable storage of claim 22, further comprising the step of:

associating a second ~~associative object~~ digital seal with one of said at least one electronic document using a second associative object.

28.   (Currently Amended)   The machine readable storage of claim 27, wherein said ~~associative object~~ digital seal includes [[an]] a first authorization code, and wherein said second digital seal ~~associative object~~ includes a second authorization code, said machine readable storage further comprising the step of:

requiring said first authorization code and said second authorization code before said one of at least one electronic document can be retrieved.

29.   (Currently Amended)   The machine readable storage of claim 22, further comprising the steps of:

establishing a first authorization code for said <u>digital seal</u> ~~associative object~~, wherein said first authorization code is associated with a first image;

encoding said at least one associated electronic documents with a second authorization code associated with a second image; and,

decoding said at least one associated electronic documents using at least in part said first image.

30. – 43. (Cancelled)